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RAJNATH SINGH TO CELEBRATE DIWALI WITH TROOPS IN ARUNACHAL PRADESH

The defence minister will celebrate the festival of lights with soldiers in Tawang, which saw the first artillery fire from China side during the 1962 war

IAF-UTTARAKHAND WAR MEMORIAL CAR RALLY

Singh's visit also coincides with the flag-in of Indian Air Force-Uttarakhand War Memorial car rally in Tawang on October 30, in the presence of Arunachal CM Pema Khandu and deputy CM Chowna Mein. In October 2023, the defence minister had carried out Shastra Puja with the troops at Tawang and also interacted with those deployed in the frontline locations along the LAC

TAWANG VISIT AMID SINO-INDIAN THAW

- Tawang is a base for men in uniforms including those of the Indian Army, Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) and Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB)
- The Tawang trip comes at a time when India-China relations have just begun to thaw following disengagement of troops in Ladakh. China gets worked up whenever an Indian minister visits Arunachal Pradesh | P9

50,000

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE LIVING IN TAWANG, WHICH CHINA CALLS LITTLE TIBET

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TRICHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

ISRAEL HITS IRAN'S MILITARY SITES

Nuclear sites, energy infrastructure spared; two Iranian soldiers killed

THREE WAVES OF STRIKES

The first wave of attacks targeted Iran's air defence capabilities to ensure the IDF's freedom of operations during Saturday's sorties, and to lay the ground for further strikes, should Iran retaliate

DRONE, MISSILE SITES HIT

The second and third waves of attacks targeted Iran's drone and ballistic missile manufacturing sites as well as sites used to launch such weapons

Flight radar data shows airspace over Iran, Syria, and Iraq closed amid Israeli strikes on Saturday

AGENCIES

ISRAEL on Saturday launched retaliatory strikes against Iran, 25 days after Tehran attacked Tel Aviv with nearly 200 missiles and drones. Israel's airstrikes started around 2 am Iranian time on Saturday and ended by 6 am. Only military sites were hit.

The Israeli military termed its attack 'precise and targeted' strikes to knock down Iran's air defence systems and other defence capabilities.

Owing to US pressure, Israel did not target Iran's nuclear or energy facilities, which were initially seen as possible targets for Israel's response to Iran's October 1 attack.

The extent of damage the Israeli strikes caused was not immediately known, though some reports quoting anonymous Israeli officials said 20 targets were hit.

Iran's state-run media reported that blasts could be heard in Tehran and some of the sounds came from air defence systems around the city.

According to US media reports, the Iranian military complex at Parchin near Tehran was hit.

Iran confirmed the attack, saying two of its soldiers were killed. It claimed its forces thwarted damage to its military sites. Iran's military said the Israeli strikes targeted military bases in Ilam, Khuzestan and Tehran provinces and caused 'limited damage', without elaborating.

Iran's foreign ministry issued a statement saying the country has a responsibility to defend itself, but added Iran "recognises its responsibilities towards regional peace and security", signalling it would not strike back.

Reports said Israel's strike was designed to minimise casualties and to give Iran a face saver. Some reports also claimed that Iran was tipped off ahead of the attack, to ensure the damage was limited.

Saturday's retaliatory strike marked the first time Israel's military has openly attacked Iran, which hasn't faced a sustained barrage of fire from a foreign enemy since its 1980s war with Iraq. In response to the latest attack, several countries, including India, called for an end to the cycle of confrontation.

The US termed the Israeli attack as an act of self-defence and warned Iran against targeting Israel again.

India said it was deeply concerned and urged all sides to take the diplomacy route. "We reiterate our call to all concerned to exercise restraint and return to the path of dialogue and diplomacy. The ongoing hostilities are to nobody's benefit, even as innocent hostages and civilian populations continue to suffer," the Ministry of External Affairs said. PTI

OBJECTIVES ACHIEVED, SAYS IDF

IDF spokesperson Rear Adm Daniel Hagari said the goals of the overnight attack on Iran were achieved successfully. "The reprisal strike was completed," he told reporters

Social media told to purge content on hoax bomb threats

RAKESH KUMAR @ New Delhi

WITH hoax bomb threats against airlines continuing unabated, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology issued an advisory directing social media platforms to promptly remove such misinformation and refrain from hosting similar content.

Stating that such hoax bomb threats pose a potential threat to public order and state security, the ministry warned that intermediaries, including social media platforms like X, Facebook, Telegram, and other apps that fail to exercise due diligence will be liable for action under the IT Act and the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023.

As part of their due diligence obligations, it is the responsibility of concerned intermediaries, including social media platforms, to promptly take necessary action by not allowing any user to host, display, publish, store, update, or share any unlawful or false information, the advisory said.

Over 275 Indian carrier flights received bomb threats in 12 days, mostly via social media. On Saturday, at least 10 hotels in Gujarat's Rajkot received hoax bomb threats. And a 25-year-old man based in Delhi was arrested for allegedly posting threat messages to a flight.

The ministry also directed intermediaries to provide information or assistance to government agencies within 72 hours.

Citing IT Rules, 2021, the ministry said it is mandatory for the intermediaries to provide information under their control or extend assistance to the government probe agencies or cyber security activities for verification of identity, or for the prevention, detection, investigation or prosecution of such elements as soon as possible but not later than 72 hours.

EXPRESS READ

RSS bats for Hindu unity, endorses UP CM's remark

MATHURA: Hindu unity is essential for everyone's good and there is a need to be vigilant against forces that seek to divide in the name of religion, caste and ideology, RSS general secretary Dattatreya Hosabale said on Saturday, virtually endorsing the "batengey toh katengey (divided we fall)" remark by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

RBI Guv gets top central banker award

MUMBAI: Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das has been ranked the top central banker by the US-based Global Finance magazine. This is the second consecutive year that Shaktikanta Das has been ranked as the top central banker globally.

NOVEMBER 26

Spl Parliament session to mark 75th anniv of Constitution

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @ New Delhi

THE BJP-led NDA government is reportedly planning a special joint sitting of Parliament on November 26 to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution of India. The joint session will be held in the historic Central Hall of the Samvidhan Sadan (old Parliament building), the venue where the first Constituent Assembly had adopted the Constitution on November 26, 1949, after which it came into effect on January 26, 1950.

Sources indicated that a formal call on the joint session will be taken by the Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs shortly. Traditionally, the winter session of Parliament begins in the last week of November or the first week of December. But this year, it appears the session may follow shortly after the Constitution Day is observed.

This year's event is particularly significant, as the ruling alliance and the Opposition INDIA bloc are at odds regarding constitutional matters.

The joint session on November 26 is expected to feature discussions on the Constitution's enduring relevance and its role in shaping Indian democracy, with participation from leaders of various political parties reflecting on the principles of justice, liberty, equality and fraternity. President Droupadi Murmu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other dignitaries are expected to address the joint session.

From the next calendar year, November 26 will be observed annually as Constitution Day.

Gazette error leads to panic over Waqf Board claiming 1,200 acres from farmers

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru, Vijayapura

AN error in a 1974 gazette notification has led to several farmers panicking over "1,200 acres" of their lands being planned to be taken over by the Waqf Board in Honavada village in Vijayapura district.

Industries Minister MB Patil on Saturday clarified that the confusion over 1,200 acres in Honavada being designated as Waqf property was due to an error in the gazette notification in 1974. This has now come about after the state government faced flak from irate farmers and the opposition BJP. The farmers on Saturday staged a protest in front of deputy commissioner's office in Vijayapura, fearing that their lands would be taken away by the Waqf Board.

Patil, who is also the Vijayapura district in-charge minister, said only 11 acres of the 1,200 acres is Waqf property. These 11 acres are in 10 survey numbers, and have a burial ground covering 10 acres and 14 guntas, with an Idgah, Masjid, and other structures on the remaining 24 guntas.

"All other land belongs to the farmers, as confirmed by the local tahsildar and deputy commissioner," Patil explained.

The gazette notifications on Waqf properties in Vijayapura district were issued in 1974, 1978 and 2016. Waqf property does exist in Mahalbagayata of Vijayapura; however, the name "Honavada" was mistakenly added in brackets after "Mahalbagayata" in the gazette, he said.

CONTINUED ON P5

CLOUDY COURSE

A thick blanket of fog envelopes NICE Road, as vehicles cautiously make their way due to low visibility, in Bengaluru on Saturday morning | VENUGOPALA T

All for school, villagers crowdfund

BASAVARAJ BHOGAVATI @ Raichur

WITH little help forthcoming, people of Kuppigudda near Lingasugur have decided to develop the government primary school in their village on their own.

They bought a plot measuring 1,600 sqft recently after collecting Rs 5 lakh and donated it to the school. Around 87 students study in Classes I to VII. The classrooms and toilets are in a pathetic condition and the school has no playground. Despite making efforts, the authorities could not get land for the playground.

With this being the situation, the villagers decided to raise money to buy land for the playground and provide other amenities to the school.

A farmer from the village said, "I decided to donate whatever money I had to have a good school for our children."

Teacher Kashibai said she and her colleagues drew the attention of the school development and monitoring committee (SDMC) members to the pitiable condition of classrooms and also stressed the need for a playground for students. "The plot bought by the villagers was registered at the office of the sub-registrar in Lingasugur a few days ago," she said.

Block education officer Hombanna Rathod said, "The villagers' initiative will help a lot in improving the quality of education in this remote village of Lingasugur."

Veeresh Munnoor, Devanna Nelogi, Hanumantaraya Nelogi, Sabanna Nelogi, Madhava Nelogi, Balappa Manamatti, Ayyanagowda Patil and other members of the SDMC collected 5 lakh from the villagers and convinced the landowner to sell the plot for the benefit of children of Kuppigudda.

They said that they would make similar efforts in the future to develop the school in their village.

Mining case: Sail, 6 others get 7 years' RI each in 6 cases

YATHIRAJU @ Bengaluru

A special court on Saturday sentenced seven accused, including Karwar Congress MLA Satish Krishna Sail, to undergo a maximum of seven years of rigorous imprisonment each in six cases concerning illegal extraction and transportation of iron ore.

All the accused have to undergo 42 years of RI in six cases and pay fines of around Rs 45 crore. This is the first order sentencing the accused in illegal mining cases in the state.

The sentenced are the then deputy conservator of port Mahesh J Biliye (now retired); Sail, managing director of Sree Mallikarjun Shipping Private Ltd; Chethan Shah, managing director of M/s Ashapur Menechem; KV Nagaraj, director of M/s Swastik Steels (Hospet) Private Ltd; KV Govindaraj, former director of M/s Swastik Steels; Mahesh Kumar K alias Kharapudi Mahesh, partner of Shri Lakshmi Venkateshwara Minerals; and Prem Chand Garg, managing director of Shri Lal Mahal Ltd. M/s ILC Industries Ltd., and M/s PJS Overseas Ltd., were also sentenced. Since the companies are legal entities, and hence, their representatives cannot be sentenced for corporeal punishment, the court ordered them to pay part of around Rs 45 crore fine. P5

HISTORIC OUTCOME

Duodecennial defeat: India's fortress breached by New Zealand

SWAROOP SWAMINATHAN @ Pune

THE oxygen had been sucked out of the place. A cheery afternoon crowd were refusing to believe what was unfolding. The Maharashtra Cricket Association Stadium was bearing witness to the death of a dynasty, a kingdom being knocked down in front of their eyes... an end of an incomparable era.

Shortly after Tea on Day 3, as Ravindra Jadeja and R Ashwin tried to string together a couple of commas towards achieving the improbable, there was a certain element of tragicomedy. The two spinners, so often who have bowled India to victory in these conditions to preserve their proud home record, were merely delaying the inevitable. Even as hundreds of fans started making their way to the exits, the two veterans fought gamely for 44 minutes. Once Ashwin fell to Mitchell Santner, the Kiwi picking up his 13th scalp of the Test, any sense of a miracle evaporated. The Black Caps, the inaugural World Test Championship champs, had mastered one of the hardest challenges in the sport; win a Test series in India. The most unlikely team to end more than a decade of dominance.

It's hard to put into words the enormity of this upset for a few reasons. Since the beginning of 2013 till the end of the Bangladesh series earlier this month, the hosts had played 53 Tests at home and won 42 (16 of them by an innings). The Kiwis had won only two away Tests since the beginning of the 2019 WTC cycle till two weeks ago. Put it this way — a team that seldom wins away from home beat the team that always wins at home 2-0 in 10 days. It will undoubtedly go down as one of the biggest shocks the sport has known this century. However, skipper Sharma refused to do any immediate 'postmortem' following the loss. "This is the first time we have had collapses," he said. "We are not able to bat properly. So, it is allowed once in 12 years. If it had been happening for 12 years, we would not have won. But, we have high expectations in India. We have to win all the matches."

MORE ON P11

New Zealand players celebrate Rohit Sharma's wicket in Pune on Saturday | PTI